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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

SUBJECT: Grounds for a Good Garden.....Information from the gardening specialists of the United States Department of Agriculture.

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If you're planning to have a garden this year, you've probably already picked your plot. But maybe you'd like to check it by this list of points. The list was made by the gardening specialists of the United States Department of Agriculture.

First, a garden should be in the direct sunshine for at least six hours a day. You'd hardly expect a lot in the shade of trees or buildings to produce good vegetables. Crops like tomatoes, eggplants, peppers and lima beans don't grow well unless the plot gets more than six hours of sun a day. The leafy vegetables can grow with less sun than the fruit or seed bearing crops. But even they need that minimum of six hours direct sun light.

Next, the land must be well-drained. Be sure your plot isn't in a pocket from which there's no drainage...else you'll have a better pond than garden.

Third, the soil. The best all-purpose garden soil is rich, deep, fine, sandy loam....free from debris. Unfortunately, many city lots have been covered with the heavy clay-like subsoil and with building trash. But soil that can be spaded into a loose, crumbly state now should be fairly easy to work all season. And if there's a rich growth of weeds or grass on your intended plot, chances are it can be developed into a excellent garden.

Fourth, you want your lot to be as nearly level as possible. A garden on a hillside invites soil erosion. If yours slopes enough for rains to wash over it, you'd better take special precautions to hold the soil in place.

One advantage that many city gardens have over farm gardens is that they're usually near a water supply. Then to, there's less chance of chickens or roaming livestock coming in. But it's best to have your garden near your home. If possible, your own backyard or an adjoining lot would be best. Then you can do the day to day jobs in it as they come up. You can get to it easily and regularly.

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